



## Association NER21 (Neuro-Environmental Rehabilitation 21<sup>st</sup> century)

Plateforme d'échange professionnel, social, de formation et de recherche

Impasse Aurore 3 - 3960 Sierre / Suisse [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org) [ner21@bluemail.ch](mailto:ner21@bluemail.ch)

Ordinary General Assembly, 8 June 2019, Geneva, Switzerland

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018-2019

2009 – 2019: Already 10 years since the creation of our association! What a path covered and what good encounters we have had, both professional and private, which have allowed the growth of the association. During this decade the NER 21 approach has achieved visibility and international recognition, although we need more clinical trials supported by scientific studies. In the opinion of scientists, we need to pursue this support with all our energy! Your committee, since the creation of the association, has been able to count on the opinions of numerous members, comprising members of the college of experts and the expert clinicians as well as ordinary members and supporters. Thank you for this, and also for your advice and constructive criticism.

Interest in our neuro-environmental approach has been further encouraged by the results of several studies, including those based upon clinical experience, which demonstrate the importance of the environment on recovery of the central nervous system. During the recent world congress of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) which took place in Geneva, Switzerland in May this year, Kanai Masashi from the University of Kobe, Japan, presented his study showing that there was a positive relationship between physical activity and environmental factors in persons post-CVA who were capable of walking.

Since the previous OGM, we notified members of the creation of an ad hoc committee “Formation NER21” composed of the three current NER21 senior instructors (Sheena Irwin-Carruthers, Susan Ryerson and myself) as well as Dre. Ursula K Imhof. The objectives are to set the process of training as an instructor in motion and to structure the course of training and the seminars which will be recognised by NER21. The members of the college of experts were also consulted.

To remind you:

#### **New NER21 training structures**

The aim is to make the training structures more accessible, taking into account the poor financial remuneration within the health sectors. The proposed training will be in the form of three seminars, each of 5 days' duration. There are three levels of training: completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> level allows access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level, and completion of the second level allows access to the 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is possible to progress through the levels within the same year, or over several years.

*The first three seminars will be held in Paris, France (1 and 2 in June 2019 and 3 in November 2019) The significant number of registrations received shows the interest of our physiotherapy and occupational colleagues.*

*These three seminars are organised by the “Association Nationale Française d’Ergothérapie (ANFE)” and the procedure for validation in order to get the certificate recognised by NER21 is being prepared by Michèle H Gerber (teaching all three courses), Dre. Ursula K Imhof and Florence Jeay (responsible for continuing education at ANFE). The ad hoc committee “Formation NER21” and the members of the college of experts were also consulted for their advice and recommendations.*



## **Association NER21 (Neuro-Environmental Rehabilitation 21<sup>st</sup> century)**

Plateforme d'échange professionnel, social, de formation et de recherche

**Impasse Aurore 3 - 3960 Sierre / Suisse [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org) [ner21@bluemail.ch](mailto:ner21@bluemail.ch)**

---

### **Instructor training in the NER21 concept**

The aim is to perpetuate education in the NER21 concept by instructors who have undergone specific training and are recognised by the association. A structure has been set up initially for qualified physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Later, training processes will be set up for other health professionals (speech and language therapists as well as care therapists).

*Virginie Duplay, a physiotherapist with the university hospitals of Lyon, France, specifically at the Henri Gabrielle Rehabilitation Hospital, is starting her training this year with Seminar 1 in Paris, to be given by Michèle H Gerber.*

### **World Confederation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT), May 2018**

Michèle H. Gerber participated in the congress of the WFOT, held in May 2018 in Cape Town, South Africa. Through the many contacts made, she was able to present the concept of NER21. Brochures were also distributed during the sessions on neurology.

### **Congress of Rehabilitation of Quebec, Canada, October 2018**

The poster entitled “Implementation of the NER21 motivational scales for use by persons with disability, their entourage and therapists during the process of rehabilitation”, prepared by Michèle H. Gerber, Ursula K. Imhof and Marie Julien, was presented by your president. A copy of the poster is available from Michèle H. Gerber. The inclusion of clinical photographs does not allow us to put the poster on our website.

As you have read in newsletter no. 14, Carolle Lavallée, a member of our college of experts and an expert clinician, has been honoured by the College of Rehabilitation of Quebec and Canada for her services to neurology and she received her prize during the congress.

### **Activities of the Committee**

Being engaged in all the activities outlined in this report, committee members consulted very frequently electronically (Skype and WhatsApp) as well as in person. The ad hoc committee for the NER21 congress, convened by Nicole Sève-Ferrieu together with the committee members, is charged with finalising the planning for the next NER21 congress. It will take place, in collaboration with the ANFE, on Friday 5 June 2020, in their venue in Paris. We give our very grateful thanks to ANFE and their president, Nicolas Biard. We shall keep you informed about the programme as soon as it is possible. The next Ordinary General Meeting of NER21 will be held at the end of the congress.

### **NER21 Scales**

The NER21 scales of effort, satisfaction/wellbeing, pain and performance were developed by Marie Julien, a Canadian speech therapist, Dre Ursula K Imhof, a medical doctor, and Michèle H. Gerber, a physiotherapist. They are published in the book “Approche thérapeutique neuro-environnementale après une lésion cérébrale / concept NER21” in 2014 (ISBN 978-2-35327-186-3). We have received and granted several requests to use the scales in rehabilitation hospitals, a stroke unit and in private practice. They have been used by physiotherapists, occupational and speech therapists and care workers and the feedback received on their use is very positive, especially for people with aphasia.



## **Association NER21 (Neuro-Environmental Rehabilitation 21<sup>st</sup> century)**

Plateforme d'échange professionnel, social, de formation et de recherche

**Impasse Aurore 3 - 3960 Sierre / Suisse [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org) [ner21@bluemail.ch](mailto:ner21@bluemail.ch)**

---

### **Collaboration with the « Sexualité et Handicap pluriels /SEHP » association**

Collaboration between our two associations is important. Dr Hubert Vuagnat, president of the SEHP and a member of NER21, is currently active in discussions to establish NER21 training in Switzerland. The aim of the SEHP association is to promote the right of all persons with disability to choose their own sexuality and to exercise their choice. This is intrinsically part of our concept of NER.

### **Courses and seminars recognised by NER21**

As more expert clinicians establish their competency in this approach, we need to ensure that all courses and seminars indicate clearly in their course advertisements that the course or seminar is recognised by the NER21 association. It is permissible to use the official logo on the course advertisement and on the certificate, but a small fee must be paid to the association. This is obligatory and is necessary to sustain the finances of the association. It should be regarded as a small contribution towards what the association has given to the members who are qualified to give courses and seminars.

To remind you – several courses on the NER21 approach have been presented in the form of less than 5 days. **This may be recognised if the number of hours is clearly indicated.**

However, it is not comparable to the 1-3 seminars as described above under instructor training.

To date, health professionals from France, Canada, the USA, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Ukraine, Brazil, Argentina and South Africa have received certificates of competency in NER21.

### **NER21 Brochure**

A reminder that the third version of the brochure, published in 2016, allowed revision of the text as well as the welcoming of two new members of the college of experts. It is recommended that you distribute it during your training courses. It is available on the website: [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org)

### **Members across the world**

These include individual members (therapists, patients and their caregivers), rehabilitation hospitals and community organisations as well as lecturers in basic and postgraduate training in universities or colleges.

The following countries are represented: Switzerland, France, Canada, the USA, South Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Togo, Ghana, Bénin, Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Portugal and New Zealand.

### **Expert Clinicians and senior instructors NER21**

To date the **expert clinicians of NER21** are : Lynn Fearnhead, Anna Greenblatt, Michèle H. Gerber, Sheena Irwin-Carruthers. Marie Julien, Carole Lavallée, Mary Riley, Lynda Rondeau, Susan Ryerson and Nicole Sève-Ferrieu.

The **senior instructors of NER21** are: Michèle H. Gerber (Switzerland), Sheena Irwin-Carruthers (South Africa) and Susan Ryerson (USA).



## **Association NER21 (Neuro-Environmental Rehabilitation 21<sup>st</sup> century)**

Plateforme d'échange professionnel, social, de formation et de recherche

**Impasse Aurore 3 - 3960 Sierre / Suisse [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org) [ner21@bluemail.ch](mailto:ner21@bluemail.ch)**

---

### **Contact persons for each category of membership**

Lucie Moisan (patients and their entourage), Marie Julien (speech and language therapists), Lynda Rondeau (physiotherapists), Anna Greenblatt (occupational therapists), Dre Ursula K. Imhof (medical doctors, hospitals and rehabilitation centres), Michèle H. Gerber (community associations and public relations).

### **Newsletters**

The newsletters edited by Dre Ursula K. Imhof provide a much-appreciated connection between the members and the committee. They provide information about new developments as well as about members involved in research or with areas of special interest. Don't hesitate to distribute these, or to provide contributions.

### **Thanks**

As always, it is a pleasure for the president to be able to count on the ideas and active collaboration of the other two members of the committee, Nicole Piaget, Treasurer and Secretary and our vice-president Ursula K. Imhof.

On this occasion, permit me to express on your behalf, our heart-felt appreciation and thanks to Nicole Piaget for the ten years she has spent as Secretary to the association. She has agreed to continue in the office of Treasurer.

Thank you for the active engagement of so many of the members and for renewing your confidence in me.

Michèle H Gerber  
President, NER21

### **Please note:**

*The President's report is now published in both French and English and is available on the website: [www.ner21.org](http://www.ner21.org)*